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Biden blasts GOP 'wacko notions' amid debt limit standoff

Associated Press

ACCOKEEK, Md. (AP) — President Joe Biden lambasted Republicans' emerging trade-off plans to raise the nation's debt limit only in exchange for budget cuts on Wednesday, declaring that GOP lawmakers are threatening a historic default on the nation's obligations "unless I agree to all these wacko notions they have."

His remarks in a union hall speech came as House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, who has struggled to unite Republicans around his own budget proposal, released a sweeping spending-restraint plan to offer to the White House along with lifting the debt limit later this year.

Cruising toward crisis, if Congress and Biden cannot reach agreement on the debt limit by summer, the government could be unable to pay all of its bills and face an economy-ravaging default.

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President Joe Biden speaks about his economic agenda at International Union of Operating Engineers Local 77's training facility in Accokeek, Md., Wednesday, April 19, 2023.

Associated Press

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Biden blasts GOP 'wacko notions' amid debt limit standoff



Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., holds an event to mark 100 days of the Republican majority in the House, at the Capitol in Washington, Monday, April 17, 2023.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

Wednesday's split-screen presentations vividly displayed how Biden and McCarthy are talking to two very different Americas.

At the union hall, focused on everyday voters, the president said that strictly limiting government spending programs could hurt a middle class that's already struggling to afford basic needs.

And demanding budget-cutting concessions in exchange for paying the nation's debts is irresponsible, Biden said, declaring that "America is not a dead-

beat nation."

He pointedly noted that the GOP congressional leader had kicked off the week by heading to Wall Street to outline his conditions for raising the country's borrowing limit.

Commenting in kind, McCarthy said, "President Biden is skipping town to deliver a speech in Maryland rather than sitting down to address the debt ceiling."

Indeed, Biden is declining to negotiate the issue as long as McCarthy insists on linking it to big federal spending restraints.

He challenged McCarthy

to "take default off the table and let's have a real serious conversation."

The speaker took to the House floor shortly before Biden spoke Wednesday and detailed his GOP plan. It would, among other provisions, claw back billions of unspent COVID-19 relief funds, rescind money to boost the Internal Revenue Service, and stop Biden's effort to cancel up to \$20,000 in student loan debt for millions of borrowers.

The California Republican argues excess government spending is driving up inflation, empowers China and threatens the future of Social Security and Medicare. Biden and McCarthy, who need to come together for the sake of the U.S. economy, are playing out diametrically opposing strategies to different audiences, each wagering he'll win out in the end.

To the extent the two men have engaged each other — with no active negotiations so far — it has been only to provide fodder for attacks.

McCarthy says Biden is "bumbling" into a default

by not meeting with him; Biden counters that McCarthy has already "threatened to become the first speaker to default on our national debt" unless he gets what he wants in the budget.

Complicating things for McCarthy, he is facing pressure not to give ground from conservatives in his razor-thin House majority who earlier this year delayed his elevation to the speakership.

But Biden contends that spending cuts would put an unacceptable strain on the government's ability to meet its constitutional responsibility to stand behind its obligations. The GOP's faith in tax cuts has blown up the deficit, he says.

Under the Republican proposal, the debt limit would be extended into next year, McCarthy said. He pressed the White House to negotiate a compromise with GOP lawmakers, noting that voters elected a divided Congress in the November midterms.

So far this year, he said, Biden "has been avoiding the issue for 77 straight days and counting."

Both men are veterans of the nasty debt limit battle of 2011, when Biden was vice president and McCarthy was a relatively new member of the House Republican leadership. They know the risks of even edging close to the debt limit deadline, such as the first-ever downgrade of the U.S. credit rating that occurred that summer. For all the posturing, the markets generally assume as of now that a deal will be reached as it has in the past.

But as they've talked past each other, they've rarely talked with each other. The president and the new Republican speaker sat down in early February, but have had little substantive communication since. The White House, instead, has pushed McCarthy publicly to release a GOP budget plan that details its proposed cuts — which Democrats believe will be anathema to voters.

Meanwhile, the White House is standing with Democrats on Capitol Hill who overwhelmingly insist that no concessions be made in exchange for lifting the debt limit. □



In this file photo taken Aug. 2, 2005, a Prudential Financial sign on the marquis direct customers to the company inside an office building in Salt Lake City.

Associated Press

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Prudential Financial illegally denied more than 200 life insurance claims despite collecting premiums from

plan participants, the Department of Labor said Wednesday, the latest case where a life insurer was found to be denying claims even though the

Gov't: Prudential illegally denied life insurance claims

customer had been paying into the plan for years.

Many employers offer what is known as supplemental life insurance as an employee benefit, which allows an employee to pay for additional life insurance coverage out of their paycheck. The settlement between Prudential of Newark, New Jersey, and the U.S. government deals with what is known as "evidence of insurability," a common

practice in underwriting supplemental life insurance contracts where the insured is required to fill out a form showing they are in good health before being covered by employer-sponsored supplemental life insurance. According to the settlement, Prudential collected premiums on some of these participants going back in some cases to 2004, despite not having the appropriate form filled out. Between at least 2017 and 2020, Prudential would then deny any claims on the life insurance policy, despite collecting premiums, citing a lack of "evidence of insurability" form. Under the terms of the settlement, Prudential must pay out a life insurance claim if premiums were collected despite having no evidence of insurability, the Department of Labor said. □

Supreme Court temporarily extends access to abortion pill

By MARK SHERMAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court has temporarily extended women's access to an abortion pill until Friday while the justices consider whether to allow restrictions on mifepristone to take effect as a legal challenge to the medication's Food and Drug Administration approval continues. In an order signed by Justice Samuel Alito on Wednesday, the court indicated it will act by Friday night. Alito provided no explanation for why the court put off a more lasting decision. The justices had given themselves a deadline on Wednesday in a fast-moving case from Texas in which abortion opponents are seeking to roll back FDA approval mifepristone, used in the most common method of abortion in the United States.

The drug first won FDA approval in 2000, and conditions on its use have been loosened in recent years, including making it available by mail in states that allow access.

The Biden administration and New York-based Danco Laboratories, the maker of the drug, want the nation's highest court to reject limits on mifepristone's use



Boxes of the drug mifepristone sit on a shelf at the West Alabama Women's Center in Tuscaloosa, Ala., on March 16, 2022.

Associated Press

imposed by lower courts, at least as long as the legal case makes its way through the courts. They say women who want the drug and providers who dispense it will face chaos if limits on the drug take effect. Depending on what the justices decide, that could include requiring women to take a higher dosage of the drug than the FDA says is necessary.

Alliance Defending Freedom, representing anti-abortion doctors and medical groups in a challenge

to the drug, is defending the rulings in calling on the Supreme Court to let the restrictions take effect now. The legal fight over abortion comes less than a year after conservative justices reversed Roe v. Wade and allowed more than a dozen states to effectively ban abortion outright.

Even as the abortion landscape changed dramatically in several states, abortion opponents set their sights on medication abortions, which make up more than half of all abortions in

the United States. The abortion opponents filed suit in November in Amarillo, Texas. The legal challenge quickly reached the Supreme Court after a federal judge issued a ruling on April 7 that would revoke FDA approval of mifepristone, one of two drugs used in medication abortions. Less than a week later, a federal appeals court modified the ruling so that mifepristone would remain available while the case continues, but with limits.

The appeals court said that the drug can't be mailed or dispensed as a generic and that patients who seek it need to make three in-person visits with a doctor, among other things.

The generic version of mifepristone makes up two-thirds of the supply in the United States, its manufacturer, Las Vegas-based GenBioPro Inc., wrote in a court filing that underscored the perils of allowing the restrictions to be put into effect.

The court also said the drug should only be approved through seven weeks of pregnancy for now, even though the FDA since 2016 has endorsed its use through 10 weeks of pregnancy. Complicating the situation, a federal judge in Washington has ordered the FDA to preserve access to mifepristone under the current rules in 17 Democratic-led states and the District of Columbia that filed a separate lawsuit.

The Biden administration has said the rulings conflict and create an untenable situation for the FDA.

In an order issued last Friday by Alito, the court put the restrictions on hold through Wednesday to give the court time to consider the emergency appeal. □

Are Brazilians Hispanic? Many say 'yes,' report says

By MIKE SCHNEIDER

Associated Press

A coding error in an annual survey by the U.S. Census Bureau has offered unprecedented insight into how large numbers of Brazilians in the U.S. identify as Hispanic or Latino.

An analysis by Pew Research Center shows that the coding mistake revealed at least 416,000 Brazilians, or more than two-thirds of Brazilians in the U.S., identifying as Hispanic in the 2020 American Community Survey. By comparison, only 14,000 Brazilians identified that way in 2019, and only 16,000 Brazilians

did so in 2021 years when the coding error wasn't made.

Since 2000, the Census Bureau hasn't classified Brazilians and other people from non-Spanish speaking countries in Latin America and the Caribbean as Hispanic because of federal government definitions that were last revised in 1997 but are being reconsidered for an update next year. Because of this, if someone marks that they are Hispanic but Brazilian on the survey, they are recoded as "not Hispanic" when the numbers are crunched.

In 2020, however, the bu-

reau inadvertently failed to make those recoding changes for Brazilians, as well as people from Portugal, the Philippines and non-Spanish speaking countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, resulting in an additional 471,000 people who identified as Hispanic in 2020 compared to 2021, Pew said.

More than 62 million people identified as Hispanic in the 2021 American Community Survey. The survey questionnaire asks if someone is Hispanic or not, and separately asks what the respondent's race is.

"In particular, the large



An envelope containing a 2020 census letter mailed to a U.S. resident sits on a desk on April 5, 2020, in Detroit.

Associated Press

number of Brazilians who self-identified as Hispanic or Latino highlights how their views of their own identity does not necessarily align with official government definitions," Pew said in a report released Wednesday. "It also underscores that being Hispanic means different things to different people."

There were more than 526,000 Brazilians in the U.S. in 2021, with more than a fifth living in Florida, according to the American Community Survey. Using different criteria, the Pew report puts the number of Brazilians in the U.S. at 602,000 people. □

Parking garage collapses in NYC, killing 1; 5 injured

By TED SHAFFREY, BOBBY CAINA CALVAN and JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A parking garage collapsed Tuesday in lower Manhattan's Financial District, killing one worker, injuring five and crushing cars as concrete floors fell on top of each other like a stack of pancakes, officials said.

Vehicles tumbled into what looked like a frozen stream of sedans and SUVs. People nearby described a fearsome rumbling, followed by screams.

Ahmed Scott arrived to collect his car after work and found a disaster in the making.

In a video he shot from across the street, someone off-camera yells, "Guard! 911! 911! There's a building collapsing on Ann Street," followed by the sound of something crumpling. About 45 seconds later, two women run out, saying the building fell while they were inside it. A man stands on a fire escape as bystanders try to figure out how to help him get down. He eventually did, Scott said.

"I hope ain't nobody else in there," Scott recalled thinking, worrying for the garage workers he'd gotten to know.

To Jadess Speller, a student at nearby Pace University, the collapse "felt like an earthquake -- like the earth



Firefighters work at the scene of a partial collapse of a parking garage in the Financial District of New York, Tuesday, April 18, 2023, in New York.

Associated Press

opened up inside, like that's how violent it was." Other students described seeing cars falling in the building. One vehicle landed on its end in the garage entrance, a photo posted by Mayor Eric Adams' office showed.

Authorities believed they had accounted for everyone inside the building, but searches continued Tuesday evening to make sure no one was in any of the squashed cars, Fire Department Chief of Operations John Esposito said. One garage employee was

rescued via a neighboring roof after being trapped on an upper floor, he said.

"He was conscious and alert and moving around, calling us. He just couldn't get down," Esposito said. Four of the injured were hospitalized and in stable condition, and the fifth refused medical attention, he said. The garage caved in around 4 p.m., a few blocks from City Hall and the Brooklyn Bridge, and about half a mile (0.8 km) from the New York Stock Exchange. Pace evacuated an adjacent dorm and

classroom building, and canceled all evening classes as it assessed the buildings' safety. School officials sent the displaced students to a student center while working out other accommodations.

Don Mulligan was on the 17th floor of a nearby hotel when he heard a roar like a jet flying overhead and felt the high-rise sway.

"You knew something was happening," said Mulligan, of Cincinnati. The hotel was evacuated, he said.

It wasn't immediately clear what caused the collapse.

City Buildings Department records show the three-story structure has been a garage at least since the 1920s, and there are no recent permits for construction. Messages were left for a parking company that lists the garage as one of its properties.

The collapse left the building "completely unstable," Adams said at a news conference. Esposito said firefighters had to pull out because of the danger, conducting searches instead with a drone and robotic dog. The building was "all the way pancaked, collapsed all the way to the cellar floor," acting Buildings Commissioner Kazimir Vilenchik said.

William Flashnick, 19, was in a Pace classroom when he and his friends thought they heard an explosion and ran to a window to look. As they opened the window, a plume of thick dust rose in the air.

When it cleared, they peered down into the parking structure, where cars were tossed asunder and a top deck had cracked open. Flashnick initially worried for all of their lives. One of his first thoughts was of the World Trade Center, which looms over the neighborhood.

"We freaked out. Given the history of this place, it's a little scary," he said. □

FBI: Ex-Maryland aide didn't plan travel for fraud trial

BALTIMORE (AP) — A former top Maryland official who skipped his trial on corruption charges and died last month as a fugitive in an armed confrontation with federal agents after a three-week manhunt had made no plans to travel for his trial in Baltimore, according to a newly-unsealed FBI affidavit. Roy McGrath, a one-time chief of staff for former Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, missed the first day of trial in federal court on March 13, triggering a manhunt that ended when McGrath was wounded in a shooting April 3 near

Knoxville, Tennessee. He died at a hospital. Authorities have released no details on how McGrath was wounded or what led up to the shooting.

McGrath's failure to appear for trial surprised his attorney, Joseph Murtha, who said at the time he believed that McGrath, who had moved to Naples, Florida, was planning to fly to Maryland the night before. McGrath long had maintained his innocence and was adamant about going to trial in hopes of clearing his name, Murtha said.

But according to an affi-

davit from an FBI agent requesting a search warrant for McGrath's home, McGrath did not have plane tickets or travel reservations in the days before his trial, news outlets reported. The affidavit, which didn't identify the agent, was unsealed Tuesday.

McGrath had last checked in with authorities two weeks earlier, and officials last visited him at the Florida home in August. McGrath's wife said she thought her husband would be flying to Baltimore the morning of the trial, the affidavit states. "Checks with airlines pro-

viding service between Florida and Baltimore, MD did not reveal any plane ticket or reservation for McGrath's travel to Maryland," according to court documents. The warrant request indicates that investigators wanted to seize McGrath's electronics and records related to his travel arrangements, financial records and any evidence that McGrath tried to alter his appearance.

McGrath served as Hogan's chief of staff for just 11 weeks. He resigned in August 2020 after it became public that he had

received a \$233,650 severance payment from his old job as head of a state-owned corporation before moving to the governor's office. McGrath was indicted in 2021 on charges that he fraudulently secured the severance payment, equal to one year's salary as the head of Maryland Environmental Service, by falsely telling the agency's board that the governor had approved it. Hogan denied knowledge of the plan. McGrath also was accused of fraud and embezzlement connected to roughly \$170,000 in expenses. □

U.N. says India to be world's most populous nation by mid-2023

By KRUTIKA PATHI
Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India is on track to surpass China by mid-2023 as the world's most populous nation, United Nations data said Wednesday, raising questions about whether a booming, young Indian population will fuel economic growth for years to come or become a liability. While India's 254 million people between ages 15 and 24 is the largest number in the world, China is struggling with an aging population and stagnant population growth. That has sparked expectations that the demographic changes could pave the way for India to become an economic and global heavyweight.

India's young citizenry could drive the country's economic growth for years to come, but it might just as easily become a problem if they aren't adequately employed. Economists have cautioned that even as India's economy is among the fastest-growing as its population rises, joblessness has also swelled. Tech giant Apple, among other companies, hopes to turn India into a potential manufacturing hub as it moves some production out of China, where wages are rising as the working age population shrinks.

The U.N. report said India will have about 2.9 million people more than China sometime in the middle of this year. India will have an estimated 1.4286 billion people versus mainland China's 1.4257 billion at that time, according to U.N. projections. Demographers say the limits of population data make it impossible to calculate an exact date; India has not done a census since 2011.

China has had the world's largest population since at least 1950, the year the U.N. began issuing population data. Both China and India have more than 1.4 billion people, and combined they make up more than a third of the world's 8 billion



Thousands of Hindu devotees take a holy dip on the occasion of Ramnavi festival, celebrated as the birthday of Hindu God Rama, in Ayodhya, India, Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Associated Press

people. Not long ago, India wasn't expected to become the most populous until later this decade. But the timing has been sped up by a drop in China's fertility rate, with families having fewer children.

India, by contrast, has a much younger population, a higher fertility rate, and has seen a decrease in infant mortality over the last three decades. Still, the country's fertility rate has been steadily falling, from over five births per woman in 1960 to just over two in 2020, according to World Bank data.

The country's population has more than quadrupled since gaining independence 76 years ago. As India looks set to become the world's largest country, it is grappling with the growing threat of climate change, deep inequalities between its urban and rural populations, economic disparities between its men and women, and a widening religious divide.

In a survey of 1,007 Indians conducted by the U.N. in conjunction with the report, 63% of respondents said economic issues were their top concern when thinking about population change, followed by worries about the environment, health and human rights.

"The Indian survey findings suggest that population anxieties have seeped into large portions of the general public. Yet, population numbers should not trigger anxiety or create alarm," Andrea Wojnar, the United Nations Population Fund's representative for India, said in a statement. She added that they should be seen as a symbol of progress and development "if individual rights and choices are being upheld."

Many are banking on India's rising number of working age people to give it a "demographic dividend," or the potential for economic growth when a country's young population is eclipses its share of older people who are beyond their working years. It's what helped China cement its place as a global power.

"So far, we have not been able to tap into our demographic dividend adequately. While the working age population has grown quite substantially, employment has not grown," said Mahesh Vyas, director of the Center for Monitoring the Indian Economy. He added that the country has struggled to create additional employment in the last six years, with the number of jobs stagnant at 405

million. India has had a phenomenal transformation from an impoverished nation in 1947 into an emerging global power whose \$3 trillion economy is Asia's third largest. It is a major exporter of things like software and vaccines, and millions have escaped poverty into a growing, aspirational middle class as its high-skilled sectors have soared. But so has joblessness. According to CMIE statistics from 2022, only 40% of working age Indians are employed.

Poonam Muttreja, head of the Population Foundation of India, agreed, saying the country must plan better for its young people.

"This large population will need a huge investment in skills for them to take advantage of the opportunities that will come up in the economy for participating in jobs. But we have to also create more jobs for them," she said, adding that investments were also needed in education.

China responded to news of the U.N. report on Wednesday with Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin saying "a country's demographic dividend depends not only on quantity but also on quality." □

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U.S.-made Patriot guided missile systems arrive in Ukraine

By ADAM PEMBLE

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — American-made Patriot missiles have arrived in Ukraine, the country's defense minister said Wednesday, providing Kyiv with a long-sought new shield against the Russian airstrikes that have devastated cities and civilian infrastructure.

The U.S. agreed in October to send the surface-to-air systems, which can target aircraft, cruise missiles and shorter-range ballistic missiles such as those that Russia has used to bombard residential areas and the Ukrainian power grid.

"Today, our beautiful Ukrainian sky becomes more secure," Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov said in a tweet.

The missiles are the latest contribution from Western allies, who have also pledged tanks, artillery and some types of fighter jets as Ukraine gears up for an expected counteroffensive. Reznikov thanked the United States, Germany and the Netherlands, without saying how many missile systems had been delivered or when they arrived. Ukrainian air force spokesman Yurii Ihnat said late Tuesday that delivery of the systems would be a landmark event, allowing Ukrainians to knock out Russian targets at a greater distance. Germany's federal government website on Tuesday listed a Patriot



Members of US 10th Army Air and Missile Defense Command stands next to a Patriot surface-to-air missile battery during the NATO multinational ground based air defence units exercise "Tobruq Legacy 2017" at the Siauliai airbase some 230 km. (144 miles) east of the capital Vilnius, Lithuania, on July 20, 2017.

system as among the military items delivered within the past week to Ukraine. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock confirmed that to lawmakers Wednesday in Berlin. Germany has also delivered the second of four medium-range IRIS-T air defense systems that it pledged last year, Baerbock said. Reznikov said he first asked for Patriot systems when visiting the U.S. in August 2021, five months before Russia's full-scale invasion and seven years after Russia illegally annexed Ukraine's Crimea peninsula. He de-

scribed possessing the system as "a dream" but said he was told in the U.S. at the time that it was "impossible."

Ukrainian personnel have been trained on the Patriot battery, which requires up to 90 troops to operate and maintain it.

"Our air defenders have mastered (the Patriot systems) as far as they could. And our partners have kept their word," Reznikov wrote. Experts have cautioned that the system's effectiveness is limited and that it may not significantly change the shape of the war, even though it will add

to Ukraine's arsenal against its bigger enemy.

The Patriot was first deployed by the U.S. in the 1980s. The system costs approximately \$4 million per missile, and the launchers cost about \$10 million each, analysts say. At such a cost, it's not advantageous to use the Patriot to shoot down the smaller, cheaper Iranian drones that Russia has been buying and using in Ukraine. In other developments Wednesday, China denied recent reports that Chinese drones have been found on Ukraine battlefields. China has insisted that it will

Associated Press

not help arm Russia, one of its key allies.

The Chinese Commerce Ministry said in a statement that Beijing maintains strict control over the export of drones in keeping with international standards preventing them from being used for nonpeaceful purposes.

China, which has repeatedly criticized the U.S. and other countries' support for Ukraine as "adding fuel to the fire" of the war, has an "objective and fair stance" and seeks peace, the statement said.

Elsewhere, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that he recently visited Moscow-controlled parts of Ukraine's southern Kherson and easternmost Luhansk provinces.

"The purpose of the trip was to meet with the military, whom I did not want to distract for a long time and a long distance from the deployment of the units they command," he said. Kyiv officials have reported daily civilian, but not military, casualties from Russian bombardment.

At least four civilians were killed and 27 others were wounded Tuesday and overnight, Ukraine's defense ministry reported.

A 50-year-old man and 44-year-old woman were killed in a Russian airstrike on a border town in the northeastern Kharkiv region, Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said in televised remarks. □

Caribbean leaders agree on plan to ban assault-style weapons

Associated Press

GEORGETOWN, Guyana (AP) — Caribbean Community leaders have agreed on plans to introduce bans in their countries on assault-style weapons mostly manufactured in the U.S. to curb spikes in gun violence and weapons smuggling in the 15-nation Caricom bloc. The decision came late Tuesday at the end of a two-day summit in Trinidad on crime. The bans would require a mix of legislation and changes in licensing

regulations.

The Caribbean leaders had called a roundtable on the issue amid complaints from several governments about an increase in gangland violence, bolstered by the availability of high-powered, military-style weapons smuggled mostly from the U.S. Jamaica, Trinidad, The Bahamas, St. Lucia and Barbados have all complained about an increase in gun murders in recent years. "Caricom heads have agreed today

to take a decision to ban the use and presence of assault weapons in the civilian population of our nations," host Prime Minister Keith Rowley told reporters at the end of the summit, attended by a majority of heads of government.

The move came just a few weeks after several member nations announced plans to join with Mexico to sue American gun manufacturers over the weapons smuggled into their countries. Bahamian Prime Min-

ister and Caricom Chairman Phillip Davis told the summit that in his country 98.6% of recovered illegal firearms could be traced to the United States, in Haiti 87.7% and in Jamaica 67%. "Jamaica had a staggering homicide rate of 52.9 per 100,000 inhabitants," he said, as compared with the global average of about 7.5 per 100,000.

However, Davis did not have figures on what percentage of the seized guns were assault-style weapons

as opposed to handguns or other weapons that would be unaffected by this week's proposed ban.

Rowley said countries in the Caribbean would need legislation to support the ban, and he called on opposition parties throughout the region to support any parliamentary action by their governments.

He noted that the Caribbean leaders have asked U.S. President Joe Biden for dialogue on the weapons issue. □

Singer Levi Silvanie premiers his “The School Tour” in October

A musical project to raise awareness on mental health and self care in secondary school

(Oranjestad)—Last Thursday, Minister Endy Croes (Education) met with singer Mr. Levi Silvanie and Mr. Friso Veenman. Mr. Silvanie is a popular artist born on Curacao and who now lives in the Netherlands. After ten years, Levi returns with a new album and a new vision, using music and storytelling to empower the youth who suffer in silence.

Upon hearing his vision, Minister Endy immediately gave his support for Silvanie's project. In the month of October, Levi will be premiering “The School Tour” in Aruba. This is musical project focuses on the mental health of young

boys and girls 15 years old and up attending secondary schools. The minister indicated that the project is already “sold out”, and is currently discussing to implement more sessions.

For the duration of five days, around 100 teenagers from secondary school will be participating in this project. In each session, Levi will be sharing his own story and through music, encourage other young people to talk about their problem and seek help early to prevent further problems with their mental health. During the sessions, the students will listen to music and talk about different topics surrounding

mental health. There will be discussions about the daily struggle of dealing with mental health problems and ways to achieve and maintain a healthy mental state.

Mr. Silvanie also added that he is working with various organizations and teams of professionals in Aruba to provide the youth with information and proper care. He expressed that around three years ago, he felt that his next musical project should have a different mission, one that also helps people in an active way. He further states that the pandemic affected the mental health of many



people.

This is also true for our community, but there is still a stigma around mental health, and most people feel embarrassment and fears when it comes to addressing it. Levi wants to use the power of music to empower and inspire conversations about mental

health and self care.

Mr. Silvanie indicated that he is very happy to be able to realize this project for the youth of Aruba, and expresses his gratitude for the minister's support. Lastly, the minister has expressed that he finds this project to be a beautiful initiative. □

Symposium on Oranjestad's 200th anniversary starts taking place today



(Oranjestad)—The Rancho Foundation celebrates their 13th anniversary today and they have announced the number of activities that will be taking place starting from today till April 27th. Starting tomorrow up until April 27th, there will be symposiums, outside exhibits and other discussions concerning the celebrations for King's Day on April 27th. Furthermore, they have also announced their plans for the 200th anniversary of Aruba's capital, Oranjestad, which will take place next year.

Clifford Rosa, president of the foundation, states that the activities relate to art and culture, which are good for the development of the Rancho area of the capital: “for us, Rancho is the heart of Oranjestad and thus we have been pushing for the need to have plans in place for a renewal of the urban area. Despite many regulations to which we need to adhere, we still encourage for the protection for the area of Rancho. However, we are also aware that it is im-

portant to discuss the protection of the entire region of the capital city, because this involves the conservation of heritage and further development of our culture.”

In order to realize the activities they have planned for the coming week, Rosa assured that they have received help from Funds for Culture Participation, which has funded their ideas for the celebration of Oranjestad's 200th anniversary.

Chrislene Arends, who func-

tions as the leader of the project “200 years Oranjestad”, assured that they are prepared a symposium today at the Renaissance Convention Center at 9am. During this symposium, there will be different speaker present who will be sharing their knowledge about the preservation of Oranjestad's heritage, along with invitees from ONG, OG and citizens of Aruba, with the goal to create opportunities for further development of the neighborhood of Rancho and overall city of Oranjestad.

phase in terms of the big celebration of 200 years of Oranjestad. We have reunited to talk about the past, present and future developments of Oranjestad,” Arends stated.

She also informed that the foundation will hold a live stream of the symposium, available on the Facebook page “Oranjestad 200”. In the live stream, they will be discussing the entire process of the project and also announce what they have set for the second phase of the project.

The mission for the project “200 years Oranjestad” is to reunite those in the community with extensive knowledge of the city, whether it be family history, pictures and other relevant information they can use for the program of the celebration. □



***French-Caribbean cuisine**
***Outdoor seating**
***Live music**
Mon - Fri by MARiSELA
Thur - Sat by Jairo Saxophone
***Early bird special from 5 till 7**
3 course menu including a glass of wine \$32



Papillon: The butterfly effect of magnificent food



PALM BEACH — Do you remember the film "Papillon" starring Steve McQueen? Papillon restaurant is the island's example where 'life imitates art.' The décor, especially the restrooms, was inspired by the movie. For more than a decade this restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. Welcome in the world of wonders where ambiance, taste and service come together and you feel you are being welcomed in the home of the owner and her team.

"We find it really important that our guests have fun; can relax while listening to live music while their taste buds are being tickled by France, The Netherlands and the Caribbean. We offer a unique fusion of dishes and a night not to forget," says owner Tina. As our special guest you can choose to dine inside our heartwarming airconditioned restaurant or we also offer outside dining on a cozy, elegant terrace with great ambiance of the surroundings. Perfect setting for an enjoyable time people watching while sipping on a delicious cocktail.

Fresh oysters, caviar and wild boar

You are on vacation, life is to enjoy! If you want something special, a different flow than the usual, then Papillon is the place to go. Foodies are in heaven here with classic French dishes such as Foie Gras, Frog Legs, fresh Oysters coming in on a weekly basis from Holland, Escargots, Dover Sole à la Meunière flown in from Europe and filleted at the table, Duck Breast seared on the skin, roasted and braised Lamb in Balashi beer and slow braised Wild Boar Shank. Do not



leave without trying the exclusive recommendation: Caviar! All of this combined with an extensive wine list from around the world makes Papillon a must-do on your Aruban vacation.

Let the music play!

Another reason to visit us is our Live Entertainment Schedule all through the week.

Get all cozy and warmed up on Sundays and Mondays by Marisella and her enchanting acoustic tunes accompanied by percussion only.

On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, Jairo will give you a real Saxophone treat while on Wednesday you can sit back, relax and enjoy your dinner while DJ Jason brings you the most smooth jazz and lounge music for a dreamy night.

The musicians interact with the guests & requests can be sent in.

The live tunes definitely add to the experience.

Vegetarian vibes present

Impressive vegetarian/vegan dishes are set up especially for the guests by the chef and Meredith from Vegan Aruba. "We offer vegan choices that are really good and tasty. Our daily soup is always vegan too". What are you waiting for, make sure to pay a visit to this elegant yet laid-back restaurant while on Aruba. You are most welcome!

Chef's Garden 6 course dinner by Papillon

Our one of a kind executive chef Juan Ludena gets extra creative outside the kitchen of Papillon Restaurant. Serving

a 6 course surprise menu featuring his International flavors and creativity with refined dishes, chef Juan Ludena is determined to give you a night to remember. Wine pairing is optional. The chef's secret garden is located in a local replica of the Aruba traditional 'cunucu' house. The tropical garden is the setting for a magical in-home private dining experience.

For more information about this magnificent option, please send us an email or ask our wait staff.

Papillon Restaurant is located at The Village across the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino and within walking distance of all other major hotels.

Make your reservation today at:

info@papillonaruba.com

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from 5pm – 7pm

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Coming Soon: Auntie Anne's Pretzels

SKY Airline set to operate flights to Aruba

Aruba Airport Authority N.V. (AAA) is extremely excited to announce the start of operations by SKY Airline in the second half of 2023 with flights out of South America to Aruba. AAA had the pleasure of hosting SKY Airline's team this morning at the airport.

AAA has been in talks with SKY Airline for several years now and has been working with the airline in exploring the start of new routes into the Caribbean. SKY Airline is a Chilean airline based at Comodoro Arturo Merino Benitez International Airport (SCL) in Santiago, Chile. It's the second-largest airline in Chile, providing passenger, postal and cargo air transport services since 2001. When it first launched, SKY Airline initially operated to key cities of Chile and was the first airline to operate under a low-cost model in Chile. It serves international routes to Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay. It also operates charter flights in Chile and South America and domestic flights within Peru.

During today's visit, the SKY Airline team was hosted on behalf of AAA by our Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Joost Meijis, Chief Operations Officer, Mr. Jurgen Benschop, Chief Revenue Development and Communications Officer, Ms. Barbara Brown, Aviation Business Development Executive, Ms. Jo-Anne Meaux Arrends, and our Operations Manager, Ms. Marylou v/d Linden. Also present were

Aruba Tourism Authority's CEO, Ms. Ronella Croes and CMO, Ms. Sanju Luidens. The SKY Airline team also met with the Director of the Department of Civil Aviation of Aruba, Mr. Edwin Kelly.

SKY Airline's Deputy Director of Strategic Planning, Mr. Julio Solar Berguecio and Network Planning Manager, Mr. Matthieu Sello-Poirier were introduced to all the stakeholders involved and were provided with valuable information about the airport facilities, the certification process for the start of this new route and further in-depth information about the support that the AAA and ATA will provide to make a possible new route a successful one. During the visit, the team received a tour of the airport, including the Terminal and Airside areas.

SKY Airline is getting ready to arrange all the necessary permits to operate in Aruba and making all the needed connections with the stakeholders in support of this intended operation. More details will follow in the coming weeks on the exact route that SKY Airline will want to operate, its start date, its frequency and aircraft type that would be used for this operation.

About AUA Airport

AUA Airport is one of the busiest airports in the Caribbean region, with 22 different airlines operating into Aruba contributing to processing over 2.5 million

passengers per year and providing air service to 22 cities and 34 non-stop destinations worldwide. AUA Airport's markets served comprise of 79% from the United States & Canada, 11% from Latin America, 6% from Europe, and 4% from Dutch Caribbean, year to date, March 2023. AUA Airport attributes this to the island's stable economic and political climate, hospitable and multilingual population, and safe environment. AUA Airport's aspiration is to become one of the most Sustainable,

Safe, and Future Proof airport so the Latin America & Caribbean region, providing a trusted workplace, modern airport facilities and excellent customer service which reflects Aruban hospitality, contributing to a prosperous future for Aruba.

Learn more about what's happening at AUA Airport by visiting www.airportaruba.com and connect with AUA Airport on Twitter, com/Aruba_Airport, Facebook.com/ArubaAirport, Instagram.com/arubaairport/ and LinkedIn.com/ArubaAirport. □



beauty
& THE BEACH

Aruba Today is delighted to share to its readers a new segment called "Beauty and the Beach", where we take a minute to honor our guests who have decided to spend their vacation on our beautiful and warm island.

In this edition, we'd like to give a shout out to **Tasha and Erika from Illinois/Missouri, U.S.A.** Aruba is always proud to host all families and guests. We at Aruba Today encourage any visitor of the island to send in their pictures and/or messages; who knows? You might get on the cover!

This segment is sponsored by Alhambra Casino and Shops.



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Aruba's underwater wonderland



ORANJESTAD - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.

Tres Trapi

Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamento, Papiamento is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind

of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.

Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla



came to Aruba, because it had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its port-side in Malmok bay, and the sunken world war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Baby beach is an excellent

beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view.

Mangel Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven.□



Linda Wolff, a trajectory dedicated to folkloric music

ORANJESTAD – Linda was born on the 9th of May 1955 in Aruba. At a very young age, she discovered her love and talent for singing. It didn't take long before she affiliated to the Santa Anna Choir and began dedicating to singing at the Santa Anna church in Noord.

IN 1979, Mr. Jossy Brokke Jr. organized a Mexican festival at the Club IOWUA, and here Linda participated singing the song 'Los Laureles' and was among the 10 finalists. She went on to represent Aruba in the grand Mexican Festival of the Antilles, which took place at the Holiday Inn hotel in Curaçao. Linda gave a beautiful performance that night. Back then, Linda was part of the Mariachi Montañeros of Noord.

Since that time, Linda continued dedicating to singing and continued demonstrating her talent and gaining experience as a singer of Ranchera music.

Linda Wolff was the main singer of Mariachi Guadarincana for a long time, where Linda would sing at family parties, birthdays, weddings and other special activities. She contin-



ued participating in most Mexican festivals, showcasing her love for this music genre, with her sensual

voice and an attractive and charismatic personality which proved popular among those loving the mariachi music.

In a past interview, Linda said that back when she and her cousins were young teenagers, they started their own home 'aguinaldo' – traditional Christmas music – and together at the yearend they would sing all the Venezuelan carols: tucusito, o luna, fuego al canon etc. showing the joy and union that they had to enjoy and sing as a family.

Linda did not stop at mariachi music, but also dedicated herself to music and singing participating in different festivals, including Gospel, Dande, Tumba and a festival dedicated to our Flag and Anthem, 18th of March and folkloric music.

In many occasions, Linda was a finalist in these festivals by showing her beautiful voice in each song.

In 1994 she participated in the grand Festival Tipico y Dande and she was the first finalist in the female category.

In 2010, Linda participated in the Gospel Festival – Soldiers of Christ and finished in 5th place. The following year in the same festival she won second place.

In 2018, Linda received a well-deserved award at the Cas di Cultura, awarded by Fundacion Artistar during a Mexican music festival for children and youth. Linda took guitar lessons and she was accompanying herself for her favorite songs.

After a while, Linda integrated into the group Lirios del Campo by invitation and was directed by Mr. Vicente Tromp, with Linda as singer and guitarist.

Linda also sang in the popular group The New Dimension, before she went on to join the popular group Placentero Ritmo y Cuerde.

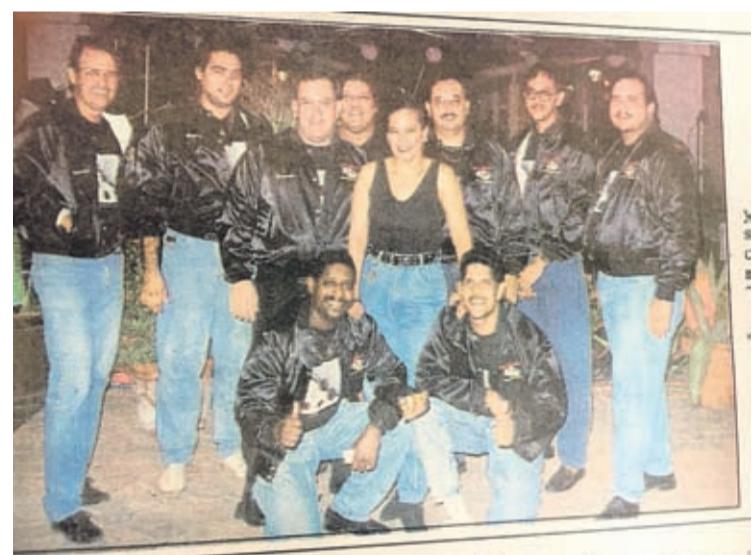
Linda was part of Placentero Ritmo y Cuerde for

many years.

Back in 1993, when Seaport Market Place would organize weekly activities including a Tropical Night, Placentero would animate this night with rhythm and flavor for tourists and locals to enjoy, and Linda was already part of the group singing and moving to the rhythm to the songs of their own production.

During her trajectory with this group, Linda sang many times at family parties and any celebration throughout the year. She participated in different festivals and had the opportunity of recording different songs for the yearend, many of them composed by Mr. Robert Maduro.

Linda Wolff was a great person and singer with an unmatched charisma, humble and charming character, always cheerful. On 18th of January our people said our final goodbyes to Linda in sadness but consoled by her beautiful and unforgettable memories. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 44 Scatter

1 Move borders, perhaps

6 Common eye color

11 Fragrance

12 Banish

13 Show uncertainty

14 Bona fide

15 Tooth layer

17 Outdated

19 Brooch

20 Get-up-and-go

23 Untie, perhaps

25 Titled woman

26 Asked to one's home

28 Julia Louis-Dreyfus show

29 Astaire's partner

30 Mess up

31 Traffic snarl

32 Do fabric work

33 Quilt cloth

35 Fable fellow

38 Fit for the fleet

41 George W.'s wife

42 Musical drama

43 Hog the mirror



Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11					12				
13					14				
				15	16				
17	18			19			20	21	22
23			24			25			
26					27				
28				29					
30				31			32		
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35	36	37			38		39	40	
41					42				
43				44					

4-20

A X Y D I B A A X R
is I. O N G F E I. I. O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-20

CRYPTOQUOTE

P I M S T P C J T E E M L V P G Y G P ' Q

S I Y B T P M I G F G Q M E B Y I V B

A L T F H E N G P K B W W B I M T D B E N

M S G P G K G F S Q S L P K. — A L B B P

D T F M I V T G

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: TRUST ME THAT AS I IGNORE ALL LAW TO HELP THE SLAVE, SO WILL I IGNORE IT ALL TO PROTECT AN ENSLAVED WOMAN. — SUSAN B. ANTHONY



A sign bearing an advertisement for Caesars Entertainment's sports betting operation is displayed near a sports betting terminal in the sports betting lounge at the Tropicana casino in Atlantic City, N.J., May 12, 2022.

Associated Press

Major leagues, broadcasters pledge responsible betting ads

By WAYNE PARRY

Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)— Most of the nation's major professional sports leagues, plus the media companies Fox and NBCUniversal are creating an alliance to ensure that sports betting advertising is done responsibly and does not target minors.

The Coalition for Responsible Sports Betting Advertising was created Wednesday, consisting of the National Football League; Major League Baseball; the men's and women's leagues of the National Basketball Association; the National Hockey League; NASCAR, Major League Soccer, Fox and NBCUniversal.

They described the group as a voluntary alliance to control how sports betting advertising, which is ever-present on the airwaves, in print and online, is presented to consumers.

It includes a recommendation that "excessive" advertising be avoided.

Formation of the group follows a move last month by the commercial casino industry through its national trade association, the American Gaming Association, to adopt a new responsible sports betting marketing code.

Both efforts recognize the proliferation of sports betting advertising in the five years since the U.S. Supreme Court cleared the way for any state to offer legal sports wagering. They also have a clear, if unstated goal: to regulate their own advertising before the government might step in and do it for them. One New York congressman has introduced legislation that would ban all online and digital sports betting advertising, and others have called for government-imposed regulation of sports betting ads. □

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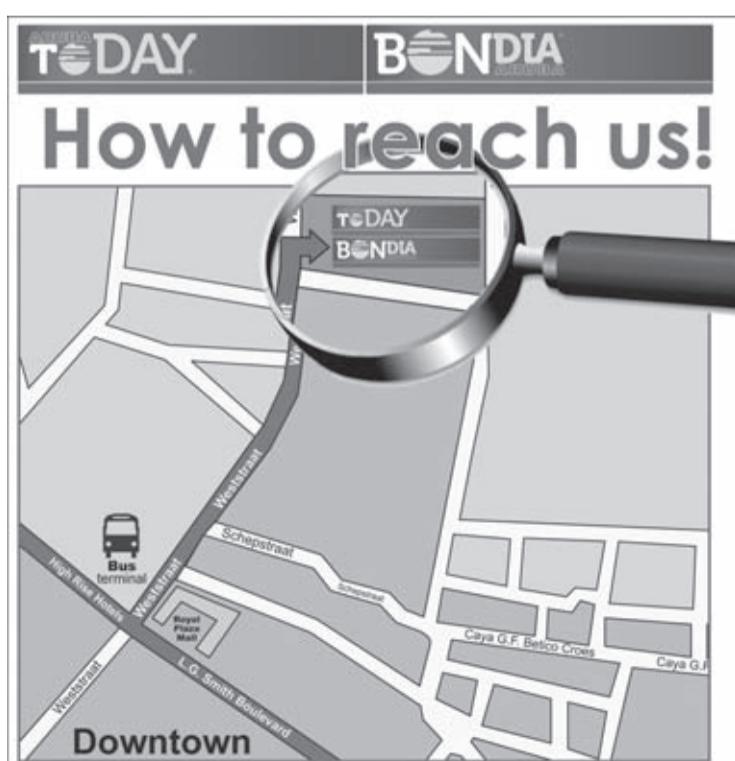
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Following stroke, Lucinda Williams back with book and album

By DAVID BAUDER
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Lucinda Williams is returning to the spotlight this spring with an autobiography, a new album and concert appearances around the world. Less than three years ago, there was real worry that her creative voice would be stilled.

In November 2020, the singer-songwriter suffered a stroke while getting ready to take a shower in her Nashville home. Her husband, Tom Overby, discovered her on the bathroom floor. Williams was rushed to the hospital.

Her recovery has been grueling and not yet complete.

"I'm doing really well," she told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "I can walk again, I don't have to use a cane or anything. I wasn't sure about that for a while."

She's fragile and moves slowly. She's unable to play the guitar, as continued weakness in her left side makes it too painful to grip the fret. It's hard not to wonder if Williams, who turned 70 in January, is pushing things.

Talk to her, and her husband-manager, and it's apparent how much she needs to be back, how they consider it part of her rehabilitation. Music was once a teenager's escape from a troubled home life,



Lucinda Williams poses for a portrait on Friday, March 24, 2023 in New York to promote her book, "Don't Tell Anybody the Secrets I Told You," out April 25.

Associated Press

and she's not about to let go. The songs haven't stopped flowing.

Retire? "No," she said. "The thought would kind of flash through my head and I would think, I'm just not ready for that."

Williams' singing voice emerged unscathed from the stroke, as some critics noticed when she began performing again last summer. "Williams had an amazing stage presence, told wonderful stories about what she was singing and her voice was nothing short of magnificent," Tom Joens wrote in American Blues Scene following a concert last September.

Her autobiography, "Don't Tell Anybody the Secrets I Told You," was written prior to her stroke, and marks her first time writing a book.

"It's partly because so many of my songs tell stories, and people are always wanting to find out the stories behind the songs," Williams said. "I feel like the book is almost my gift to fans." When Williams met and married Overby, there were followers who seriously wondered if it would hurt her songwriting, since her trail of failed relationships and fleeting crushes provided uncommon fodder. The idea sounded insulting, even sexist.

Yet seeing it all outlined in print is frankly breathtaking. Her taste in men poets on a motorcycle, she describes it didn't lend itself to slow and steady relationships.

One can construct a bingo card of past boyfriends, or near boyfriends, and the memorable songs those personal stories inspired: "Lake Charles," "Pineola," "Joy," "Passionate Kisses," "Still I Long for Your Kiss," "Right in Time," "Those Three Days," "Wakin' Up," "Real Live Bleeding Fingers and Broken Guitar Strings" and so on.

There's some bold-face rock 'n' roll names, too. Readers will find out the

songs that are about Ryan Adams and Paul Westerberg. The meat of her story, however, is of surviving mental illness.

Williams' mother was sexually molested as a young girl and spent years in and out of mental institutions. Williams' father would say, "it's not her fault, she's not well." The singer and two younger siblings grew up with a mother who was only half there.

Her father, poet Miller Williams, was an itinerant college professor constantly moving the family to different towns. He apologized to his daughter when he first heard the line about a young girl in a back seat, "little bit of dirt mixed with tears," in the song "Car Wheels on a Gravel Road."

She hadn't recognized she was writing about herself. It wasn't all bad; Williams said the parties her father's literary friends had put rock 'n' rollers to shame.

An undergrad in one of her father's classes moved into their home as a "guardian" when she was about 12.

"I just tried to be as respectful as possible and ignore the questions turning over in my head," she wrote. "But it wasn't easy."

That's about when her own obsessive-compulsive disorder emerged. She began playing music, describing it as "the world I wanted to be in, a better world than the one I was in." □

Liz Cheney memoir 'Oath and Honor' coming in November



Vice Chair Rep. Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., listens as the House select committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol holds its final meeting on Capitol Hill in Washington on Dec. 19, 2022.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former Rep. Liz Cheney has a memoir and a "warning" coming out this fall. In "Oath and Honor," she will write about her estrangement from former President Donald Trump and the Republican Party in the aftermath of the Jan. 6 siege of the U.S. Capitol.

"The last two years have shown us once again that our constitutional republic is not self-sustaining," Cheney said in a statement released Tuesday by Little, Brown and Company,

which will publish her book November 14.

"It survives only because of the courage and honor of individual Americans. When history looks back on this time, each elected official will have to answer the questions: Did we do our duty? Were we faithful to our oath of office?" Cheney said.

Cheney, daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney, had been a leading Republican voice for years. But she parted with many of her colleagues

over Trump's false claims of voting fraud and her position as vice chair of the Congressional committee that looked into the insurrection on Jan. 6, 2021. Cheney has said she wants to ensure that Trump, who has announced his candidacy for 2024, will never be president again.

Once a dominant presence in Wyoming politics, she was defeated in the Republican primary last summer by Harriet Hageman, who had been endorsed by Trump. □

Clutch like a Fox: Sacramento guard wins new NBA award

By TIM REYNOLDS

AP Basketball Writer

It was a tie game in Orlando on Nov. 5. De'Aaron Fox got the ball with about five seconds left, took four dribbles and let a shot fly from just inside of midcourt as time expired.

Swish, for the win.

A clutch moment one of many for the Sacramento guard this season. Fox was announced Tuesday night as the inaugural winner of the NBA's clutch player of the year award, as selected by a panel of 100 writers and broadcasters who cover the league.

Miami's Jimmy Butler was second, and Chicago's DeMar DeRozan was third. "You can't be afraid to fail," Fox said on the TNT broadcast of the announcement. "Obviously, you're not going to make every shot, but my teammates, my coaches, they put me in position to succeed. So the least I can do is have confidence in myself to take good shots."

Fox became Sacramento's first individual winner of a major award since Tyreke Evans held off Stephen Curry for rookie of the year in 2010. The Kings almost certainly won't be waiting 13 years for their next



Sacramento Kings guard De'Aaron Fox (5) reacts after making a 3-point basket in the third quarter during Game 1 against the Golden State Warriors in the first round of the NBA basketball playoffs in Sacramento, Calif., Saturday, April 15, 2023.

Associated Press

award it'll be more like 24 hours, probably, with Mike Brown expected to be announced as the coach of the year when the NBA reveals those results on Wednesday. The voting was a runaway; Fox, who led the league with 194 clutch points, got 91 of the possible 100 first-place votes and 460 of a possible 500 points. Butler got one first-place vote and 104 points,

while DeRozan finished with 80 points just three ahead of fourth-place finisher Jalen Brunson of New York. DeRozan was second in the NBA with 159 clutch points scored this season, and Butler was third with 151. Fox led the league in clutch-game scoring this season with 194 points in 39 such games; clutch games are defined as those where the margin between teams

is five points or less at any point in the final 5:00. He actually shot better from the field in those moments (53%) than he did at all other times (51%).

He becomes the first recipient of the Jerry West Trophy; it was named for the player who earned the moniker of "Mr. Clutch" during his career. The NBA announced in December that it was adding the

clutch award; like most other awards, it is voted on by the media panel, but unlike other awards the field of candidates is first narrowed down by polling of NBA coaches.

Fox was one of many major contributors to a resurgence in Sacramento this season.

The Kings who currently lead defending champion Golden State 2-0 in a Western Conference first-round series reached the post-season for the first time in 17 years. Fox is averaging a team-best 31 points in those two playoff games so far.

And at 48-34, this was Sacramento's best regular season since going 50-32 in 2004-05.

"My teammates and my team put me in position to succeed," Fox said.

The award was the second major individual one to be announced by the league this season.

Memphis' Jaren Jackson Jr. was announced Monday as the defensive player of the year. The rest of the schedule for announcing other league awards, including MVP, most improved player and rookie of the year, has not yet been disclosed. □

Heim, Semien lead Rangers to 12-3 win over KC, series sweep

By DAVE SKRETTA

AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Jonah Heim hit a three-run homer, Marcus Semien had three hits and drove in a pair of runs, and the Texas Rangers rolled to a 12-3 victory over the Kansas City Royals on Wednesday to wrap up a lopsided sweep of their three-game series. Ezequiel Duran added a bases-clearing double, and Leody Taveras and Adolis García also drove in two runs apiece, helping the Rangers (12-6) win their fourth straight and match the fifth-best start in franchise history.

Martin Pérez (3-1) allowed three runs on eight hits over 5 2/3 innings. He's gone at least five in 34 straight starts, the longest streak

ever by a Rangers left-hander, though he allowed more than two runs for the first time this season.

It hardly mattered against the Royals.

They've been outscored 52-15 while losing six straight games, and they have lost nine of their last 10 to fall to 4-15 under first-year manager Matt Quatraro. Kansas City has won just once in 13 games at home this season.

Brady Singer (1-2) didn't give them much of a chance Wednesday. He allowed five runs on six hits and three walks while using 97 pitches just to get through five innings. He had four strikeouts, two of them coming on full-count pitches.

Singer looked like he was

developing into a staff ace last season, but this year has been a struggle. The young right-hander allowed eight runs on 10 hits in his last start against Atlanta, and he's allowed 18 runs over 16 innings in his last three outings.

Just like the previous night, when the Rangers jumped on erratic Royals starter Brad Keller, they took advantage of Singer's early trouble finding the strike zone to jump to a 3-0 lead by the end of the second inning. Semien led off the game with the first of his three singles and Travis Jankowski worked a four-pitch walk before García's sacrifice fly gave Texas a 1-0 lead. Then in the second, Heim drew a leadoff walk before scoring on a

double by Taveras, who proceeded to score when Semien sent a single to right field for a 3-0 lead.

The Royals scratched out two runs in the sixth to make it a game, but the Rangers

answered with four in the seventh the binge beginning with a free base due to catcher's interference before Duran's punctuating three-run shot in the ninth. □



Texas Rangers first baseman Nathaniel Lowe (30) catches a foul ball off the bat of Kansas City Royals' Matt Duffy during the second inning of a baseball game, Wednesday, April 19, 2023, in Kansas City, Mo.

Associated Press

Tiger Woods has ankle surgery, rest of majors in doubt

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

Tiger Woods had fusion surgery on his right ankle Wednesday morning to alleviate arthritis from a broken bone, putting in doubt whether he plays any more majors this year.

Woods disclosed the surgery on Twitter and said it was a subtalar fusion procedure to address post-traumatic arthritis from when he broke his talus bone in February 2021.

"He's resting now and will start the recovery process," Mark Steinberg, his agent at Excel Sports, said in a telephone interview.

The surgery took place in New York, and Steinberg said Woods has returned to his home near Jupiter, Florida.



Tiger Woods reacts after missing a putt on the 18th hole during the weather delayed second round of the Masters golf tournament at Augusta National Golf Club on Saturday, April 8, 2023, in Augusta, Ga.

Associated Press

da, to begin rehabilitating. As for when Woods could return to playing golf, Steinberg said there was "no timetable on this."

"The first goal is to recover and lead a much more enjoyable day-to-day life," he said.

Woods shattered multiple bones in his right leg and ankle in February 2021 when the SUV he was driving crashed off a suburban coastal Los Angeles road at about 85 mph and tumbled down the side of a hill. The injuries were so severe, Woods said, that doctors contemplated amputation. Woods has had multiple surgeries on his leg as a result of the car crash. The ankle has been causing most of the problems of late, including a noticeable limp when he played four of the last five majors, most recently the Masters two weeks ago.

The talus is the second-largest of a group of bones known as the tarsus, which forms the lower part of the ankle joint and transmits the weight of the body from the lower leg to the foot. The subtalar joint allows for side-to-side movement needed for walking, especially on uneven surfaces.

Most estimates put recovery from subtalar fusion at eight to 12 weeks. That would all but rule out the PGA Championship next month. Woods was doubtful, anyway, given it will be at Oak Hill in Rochester, New York, with likely cold temperatures.

The U.S. Open is June 15-18 at Los Angeles Country Club, and the British Open is in three months (July 20-23) at Royal Liverpool in England.

Woods made an improbable return 14 months after the car crash to play in the Masters and walked 72 holes. Remarkably, he has missed only one cut the British Open at St. Andrews last summer although he withdrew after three rounds of the PGA Championship last year and he withdrew this year in the middle of the third round of the rain-delayed Masters. □



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